

### **REMARKS**

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated January 15, 2002. Accordingly, a response is due on or before April 15, 2002. After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-16 are pending in the application. Applicant acknowledges the Office Action dated March 12, 2002 which entered the second preliminary amendment dated November 20, 2001 but otherwise duplicated the Office Action dated January 15, 2002. The explanation provided in the Remarks section is in response to the rejections and objections of the Examiner. Reconsideration of this application as amended is requested.

#### **Formal Objections**

The Examiner objects to claim 1 and claim 7 because the transitional word "comprising" was not entered appropriately. Applicant has amended claims 1 and 7 to comply with the Examiner's requests. Reconsideration is requested.

#### **Substantive Rejections**

The present invention provides a solution to the problem confronted by electricians who install plastic circuit-housing boxes in the field. These boxes have integral plastic strain-reliever ports which, by their very nature, are easily broken, i.e. they are formed by opposed, inwardly-angled plastic fingers through which the Romex cable is pushed. These fingers are easily snapped off, rendering the entire box and the effort expended in installing it worthless. Applicants solve this problem by locating all of the opposed finger ports in a separate, inexpensive panel which fits into the box in one of several ways. If a port is broken, only the separate panel need be replaced.

The Examiner relies on Michaelis et al., 5,241,136, as relevant prior art. In fact, Michaelis does not confront the problem of replacing large housing as the result of easily broken fingers in the strain reliever ports.

To explain, Michaelis discloses strain - relievers associated with ports 35 comprising hooded extensions 33,34 which cooperate with separate, U-shaped

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slide-in clamp pieces 36. The breakage problem associated with opposed-plastic-finger strain-reliever ports does not exist in the Michaelis structure. Of course, a different problem is created; i.e., losing the clamps 36, but that is not germane to this issue.


The Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, and 4 as being anticipated by Michaelis, et al. Claim 1 has been amended consistent with the above explanation to more particularly recite the nature of the strain reliever structure thereby to distinguish from Michaelis. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

### **35 U.S.C. §103**

The Examiner asserts that claim 3 is rejected as being unpatentable based on Michaelis, et al. in view of Farr, et al. Claim 3 depends from allowable claim 1 and, therefore, should be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is requested.

The Examiner asserts that claims 7-9 and 15-16 are rejected as being unpatentable over Butler, et al. in view of Farr, et al. Claim 7 has been amended to more particularly point out that the ports are defined by integrally molded opposed plastic fingers for unidirectionally resisting passage of an electrical cable therethrough. Neither Butler, et al. nor Farr, et al. anticipate, teach, or suggest any combination that shows integrally molded opposed plastic fingers in their cable outlet ports. Claim 8 has been amended to claim a method for attaching the outlet port member to the housing using tabs on one end and a snap-fit on the other end. Additionally, claims 8 and 9 are now dependent on allowable claim 7.

Regarding claim 15, the Examiner asserts that Butler, et al. in Figure 4 discloses a conductive metallic bus bar 29 mounted to a housing. Item 29 in Butler, et al. is a grounding strip, not a current carrying bus bar. In addition, there are significant structural differences between Item 29 in Butler, et al. and Applicants' bus bar. Figure 8 shows the bus bar having stabs 82 that are bent out of plane for insertion into the housing 30. The Butler, et al. grounding strip is just a strip of metal





with stabs in the same plane as base of the strip. Moreover, claims 15 and 16 also depend from allowable claim 7 and, therefore, are also in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is requested.

The Examiner asserts that claim 10 is rejected as being unpatentable over Butler, et al. in view of Farr, et al. and in further view of Michaelis, et al. Claim 10 depends from allowable claim 9 and, therefore, should be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection is requested.

#### **Allowable Subject Matter**

The Examiner states that claims 5, 6, and 11-14 were objected to as being dependent on rejected base claims but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has amended the base claims to be in condition for allowance, therefore, claims 5, 6, and 11-14 should also be in condition for allowance.

It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application as originally filed. It is further submitted that this Amendment has antecedent basis in the application as originally filed, including the specification, claims and drawings, and that this Amendment does not add any new subject matter to the application. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

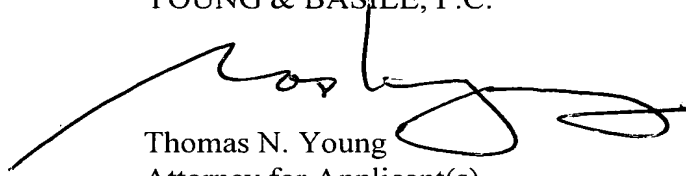
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If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & BASILE, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas N. Young', is written over the printed name.

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TNY/redp

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**VERSION OF CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

In the claims:

1. For use in combination with an electrical system housing of the type having one or more rigid panels and an opening defined by at least one of said panels comprising:

an electrical cable outlet port member having a first end and a second end, said member being separate from but removably attachable to said housing [and] in substantial registry with said opening;

said member comprising a plurality of cable outlet ports, each defined by [means] integrally molded opposed plastic fingers for unidirectionally resisting passage of an electrical cable there through.

2. The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein said [outlet port member is plastic] member includes at least one tab on said first end for engaging at least one mating slot in said housing and said member having at least one notch for providing a snap fit connection between said housing and said second end of said member.

7. In combination comprising:  
[the] a housing for electrical devices including at least one panel having an opening formed therein; and

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[the] an electrical cable output port member having a first end and a second end adapted to be removably secured to said panel in substantial registry with said opening;

said outlet port member comprising the plurality of cable outlet ports each defined by [means] integrally molded opposed plastic fingers for unidirectionally resisting passage of an electrical cable there through.

8. The apparatus as defined in claim 7 wherein said member [and said housing are constructed of plastic] includes at least one tab on said first end for engaging at least one mating slot in said housing and said member having at least one notch for providing a snap fit connection between said housing and said second end of said member.

